

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 00089 030716Z

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 DOTE-00 EB-07

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O P 030635Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6053

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BOMBAY PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MADRAS PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 0089

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, IN

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF GOI RAILWAY MINISTER L.N. MISHRA

1. A BOMB EXPLOSION UNDER THE DAIS AT A PROVINCIAL RAILROAD JUNCTION, SAMASTIPUR, 50 MILES NORTHEAST OF THE BIHAR STATE CAPITAL OF PATNA JANUARY 2 KILLED GOI RAILWAY MINISTER L.N. MISHRA AND INJURED HIS BROTHER, BIHAR IRRIGATION MINISTER J. N. MISHRA, AND 18 OTHER OFFICIALS. ANOTHER BOMB WAS EXPLODED AT THE HOUSE OF ANOTHER RAILWAY OFFICIAL IN THE SAME TOWN LATER IN THE EVENING.

2. INITIAL PRESS REPORTS DESCRIBED MISHRA'S INJURIES AS ONLY "SKIN DEEP", AND HIS DEATH WAS REVEALED ONLY IN MID-MORNING JANUARY 3. THE POLICE HAVE NOT THUS FAR ANNOUNCED ANY ARRESTS. CONGRESS AND OPPOSITION LEADERS (BLD AND JANA SANGH) HAVE CONDEMNED THE BOMBING.

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3. COMMENT: ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS HAVE A LONG HISTORY IN INDIAN POLITICS BUT MISHRA IS THE FIRST IMPORTANT POLITICAL LEADER TO SUCCUMB TO ONE SINCE THE SHOOTING OF FORMER PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER KAIRON TEN YEARS AGO, AND THE FIRST NATIONAL LEADER SINCE GANDHI IN 1949. THE LAST BOMB ATTACK (UNSUCCESSFUL THAT TIME) ON A MAJOR LEADER WAS THAT AGAINST GANDHI IN JANUARY 1948 JUST DAYS BEFORE THE SUCCESSFUL SHOOTING OF GANDHI JANUARY 30. SPECULATION ON THE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF MISHRA RANGES FROM THE FAR LEFT (CPM/CPM-L) TO RAILWAY WORKERS DISMISSED AFTER LAST YEAR'S PROLONGED AND UNSUCCESSFUL RAILWAY STRIKE.

WHILE THE PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF THE GOI MAY BE OVER THE POSSIBILITY THAT POLITICS BY ASSASSINATION AND TERROR MAY BE GIVEN A NEW FILLIP BY THIS INCIDENT, MISHRA'S DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE DOES IN FACT RELIEVE THE PRIME MINISTER OF A POLITICAL BURDEN WHICH HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT IN RECENT MONTHS.
MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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TAGS: PINS, IN, (MISHRA, L N)
To: STATE
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